

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, PO, UK

SUBJECT: SOARES INTERVIEW WITH TIMES

SUMMARY: LEADER OF PORTUGUESE SOCIALISTS, SOARES, GAVE APPARENTLY EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW TO TIMES CORRESPONDENT REPORTED SEPTEMBER 23. SOARES STRESSED FACT SOCIAL DEMOCRACY NOT APPLICABLE TO PORTUGAL WHERE CAPITALISM AUTHORITARIAN AND "PARASITICAL". SOARES SAID SOCIALISM COULD NOT BE REACHED BY DEMOCRATIC METHODS IN PORTUGAL, AND HE DREW DISTINCTION BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY. SOARES ALSO REVEALED HE EXPECTS ATTEND BRITISH LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE IN BLACKPOOL AS REPRESENTATIVE OF HIS PARTY AND OF SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL.

1. IN LONG AND APPARENTLY EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH TIMES REPORTER (AS REPORTED IN TIMES SEPTEMBER 23), PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST LEADER MARIO SOARES STATED UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT SOCIAL DEMOCRACY NOT APPLICABLE TO PORTUGAL WHERE CAPITALISM HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN AUTHORITARIAN AND "PARASITICAL". SOARES SAID THAT FRENCH, ITALIAN AND SPANISH

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SOCIALIST PARTIES, LIKE PORTUGUESE PARTY, WERE SOCIALIST

RATHER THAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC. ALL FACED A SITUATION DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE SOCIALISTS IN GERMANY AND NORTHERN EUROPE, AND ALL HAD TO COMPETE WITH STRONG COMMUNIST PARTIES FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE WORKING CLASS. SOCIALIST PARTIES IN ALL FOUR EXAMPLES CITED WERE FORCED TO COOPERATE WITH COMMUNIST PARTIES IN TRANSFORMING SOCIETY, SINCE IT WAS QUESTIONABLE IN THESE EXAMPLES WHETHER SOCIALISM COULD BE REACHED BY DEMOCRATIC METHODS.

2. SOARES CALLED FOR JOINT CONFERENCE BETWEEN SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST PARTIES IN THE FOUR COUNTRIES CITED. HE SAID WE (I.E., THE SOCIALISTS) ARE NOT PREPARED TO SACRIFICE VALUES OF POLITICAL FREEDOM, NOTING THE WILLINGNESS OF COMMUNISTS TO SUPPRESS CIVIL LIBERTIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS. COMMUNISTS, HE CONCLUDED, WERE MOVING NOT TOWARD SOCIALISM BUT TOWARD VARIOUS FORMS OF DICTATORSHIP.

3. WHILE SOARES SAID HE BELIEVED DANGER HAD RECEDED OF LEFT- OR RIGHT-WING DICTATORSHIP UPON DEPARTURE OF GONCALVES AND RETURN OF SOCIALISTS AND PPD TO GOVERNMENT, HE CAUTIONED THAT COMMUNISTS WERE STILL AGGRESSIVE AND WERE TRYING TO KEEP ONE FOOT IN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE OTHER IN OPPOSITION.

4. SOARES EXPLAINED OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE AGAINST COMMUNISTS IN PORTUGAL AS EXPRESSION OF POPULAR, "GENUINE" HATRED AMONG PEOPLE FOR AUTHORITARIAN BEHAVIOR OF COMMUNISTS. COMMUNISTS HAD INSTALLED THEMSELVES IN STATE APPARATUS AND DOMINATED BOTH INFORMATION MEDIA AND ARMY AND PEOPLE WERE REACTING SPONTANEOUSLY. SOARES MADE POINTED REFERENCE TO RECENT STATEMENTS BY FORMER BRITISH MINISTER OF OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT (JUDITH HART) WHO "FAILED TO UNDERSTAND" PORTUGUESE SITUATION.

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5. REGARDING PPD, SOARES EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT ATTITUDE OF SA CARNEIRO WHOSE LATEST INTERVIEWS SHOWED A CERTAIN "RIGHT-WING INTRANSIGENCE" WHICH COULD CREATE PROBLEMS.

6. NEW GOVERNMENT IN PORTUGAL, ACCORDING TO SOARES, MUST RESTORE DEMOCRATIC FREEDOM IN THE MEDIA, AND HE CITED THE REPUBLICA CASE AND THAT OF RADIO RENASCENCA.

7. SOARES SAID SOCIALISTS WOULD TAKE MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY ON PORTUGUESE ECONOMIC SITUATION, AND HE EMPHASIZED PRESENT HIGH-LEVEL OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE PROBLEMS CREATED BY ANGOLAN REFUGEES.

8. COMMENT: FCO OFFICIALS INDICATED TO EMBASSY OFFICERS SEPTEMBER 23 THAT THEY WERE NOT SURPRISED SO MUCH BY WHAT SOARES SAID, BUT BY THE CLARITY OF HIS EXPOSITION. THEY FOUND LITTLE NEW IN THE INTERVIEW. SOARES' COMMENTS, THEY CONCLUDED, WERE LIKELY NOT TO REASSURE BRITISH PRIVATE INVESTORS, SOME OF WHOM HAVE BEEN PRESSURED TO MAINTAIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AN EVEN INCREASED SIZE OF INVESTMENTS IN PORTUGAL BY THREATS OF FURTHER NATIONALIZATION. IN SOME CASES THESE INVESTORS HAVE BEEN WAGERING, IN EFFECT, THAT LATEST CABINET RESHUFFLE MIGHT PRODUCE MORE FAVORABLE CLIMATE AND GREATER SECURITY IN THE FUTURE. SOARES' STATEMENT ALSO DOES LITTLE TO ENCOURAGE EITHER BRITISH GOVERNMENT OR EC NINE TO SPEED UP PLANS FOR ECONOMIC AID AND ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL, WHICH THEY ACKNOWLEDGE IS VERY MUCH REQUIRED AT THE PRESENT TIME. END COMMENT

RICHARDSON

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